

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-19. (Cancelled)

20. (Currently Amended) A fuel cell system comprising:

a fuel cell which generates electricity by a chemical reaction between a fuel gas supplied to an anode side of the fuel cell and an oxidization gas supplied to a cathode side of the fuel cell;

determining means for determining whether there is a possibility that a chemical short is occurring in the fuel cell when supply of the fuel gas and the oxidization gas to the fuel cell is stopped; and

scavenging means for supplying a scavenging gas to the cathode side when it has been determined that there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring,

wherein the ~~estimating~~ ~~determining~~ means is provided with ~~includes~~:

gas pressure detecting means for detecting a gas pressure of the fuel gas on the anode side of the fuel cell,

closing means for closing off the anode side of the fuel cell when supply of the fuel gas and the oxidization gas to the fuel cell is stopped,

gas pressure decrease amount obtaining means for obtaining a gas pressure decrease amount of the fuel gas sealed on the anode side by the anode side being closed off by the closing means,

consumption amount determining means for determining a consumption amount of the oxidization gas on the cathode side by the obtained gas pressure decrease amount, and

chemical short possibility determining means for determining that there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring when the determined consumption amount is greater than a third reference value.

wherein the determining means determines again, when it has been determined that there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring, whether there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring, and the scavenging means supplies the scavenging gas to the cathode side when it has been determined again that there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring, and

the determining means sets the third reference value smaller than a predetermined value when it has been determined again that there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Previously Presented) The fuel cell system according to claim 20, wherein the gas pressure decrease amount obtaining means detects a first gas pressure of the fuel gas sealed on the anode side after a first predetermined period of time has passed after the anode side of the fuel cell is closed off, and detects a second gas pressure of the fuel gas sealed on the anode side after a second predetermined period of time has passed after the first gas pressure is detected, and obtains a difference between the first gas pressure and the second gas pressure as the gas pressure decrease amount.

23-25. (Canceled)

26. (Previously Presented) The fuel cell system according to claim 20, wherein the fuel gas is hydrogen gas, the oxidization gas is air, and the scavenging gas is a small amount of air.

27. (Previously Presented) The fuel cell system according to claim 20, wherein the scavenging means supplies to the cathode side an amount of the oxidization gas that is

less than the amount of the oxidization gas supplied to the cathode side when the fuel cell is idling, when it has been determined that there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring.

28-31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently Amended) A control method for a fuel cell system provided with a fuel cell that generates electricity by a chemical reaction between a fuel gas supplied to an anode side of the fuel cell and an oxidization gas supplied to a cathode side of the fuel cell, comprising:

determining whether there is a possibility that a chemical short is occurring in the fuel cell when supply of the fuel gas and the oxidization gas to the fuel cell is stopped; and

supplying a scavenging gas to the cathode side when it has been determined that there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring,

wherein the determining whether there is the possibility that the chemical short is occurring includes:

detecting a gas pressure of the fuel gas on the anode side of the fuel cell,

obtaining, by the detection, a gas pressure decrease amount ΔP of the fuel gas sealed on the anode side by the anode side being closed off,

determining a consumption amount of the ~~oxidation~~oxidation gas on the cathode side by the obtained gas pressure decrease amount ΔP , and

determining the possibility that the chemical short is occurring when the determined consumption amount is greater than a third ~~predetermined value-reference value~~,

wherein, when it has been determined that there was the possibility that the chemical short was occurring, it is again determined whether there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring, and the scavenging gas is supplied again to the cathode side when it has been determined again that there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring, and

the determining whether there is a possibility that a chemical short is occurring sets the third reference value smaller than a predetermined value when it has been determined again that there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring.

33. (Previously Presented) The control method for a fuel cell system according to claim 32, wherein the detecting a gas pressure detects a first gas pressure of the fuel gas sealed on the anode side after a first predetermined period of time t_1 has passed after the anode side of the fuel cell is closed off, and detects a second gas pressure P_2 of the fuel gas sealed on the anode side after a second predetermined period of time has passed after the first gas pressure P_1 is detected, and obtains a difference between the first gas pressure P_1 and the second gas pressure P_2 as the gas pressure decrease amount ΔP .

34. (Canceled)

35. (Currently Amended) The control method for a fuel cell system according to claim 1, claim 32, wherein the fuel gas is hydrogen gas, the oxidationoxidization gas is air, and the scavenging gas is a small amount of air.

36. (Currently Amended) The control method for a fuel cell system according to claim 1, claim 32, wherein the supplying a scavenging gas supplies to the cathode side an amount of the oxidationoxidation gas that is less than an amount of the oxidationoxidation gas supplied to the cathode side when the fuel cell is idling, when it has been determined that there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring.

37. (New) The fuel cell system according to claim 22, wherein the determining means sets the second predetermined period of time longer than a predetermined period of time when it has been determined again that there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring.

38. (New) The fuel cell system according to claim 33, wherein the determining whether there is a possibility that a chemical short is occurring sets the second predetermined period of time longer than a predetermined period of time when it has been determined again that there is a possibility that the chemical short is occurring.